

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BONN 14685 01 OF 03 081451Z
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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 14685

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E.O. 11652: XGDS 2, 3
TAGS: CASC, CARR, GE, GW
SUBJECT: VOGEL, VAN NORMAN AND CHILEANS

REF: STATE 211554

1. I MET WITH VOGEL IN BONN THE EVENING OF SEPTEMBER 6.
2. ON VAN NORMAN, VOGEL SAID HE HAD VISITED HIM IN PRISON AT HIS REQUEST. VOGEL HAD NOT YET HAD ACCESS TO THE POLICE FILE. HOWEVER, THE CHARGE WAS THAT VAN NORMAN HAD ATTEMPTED TO IDENTIFY AND OBTAIN THE MEDICATIONS USED BY THE EAST GERMANS IN THE TRAINING OF THEIR TOP-FLIGHT ATHLETES, AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON THE PRECISE METHOD OF USE. VOGEL SAID VAN NORMAN HAD CONTACTED EAST GERMANS KNOWLEDGEABLE IN THIS FIELD AND HAD DEVELOPED A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF INFORMATION WHICH WAS CONSIDERED HIGHLY SENSITIVE BY THE GDR AUTHORITIES.

3. I ASKED VOGEL HOW VAN NORMAN'S ACTIVITIES HAD COME TO OFFICIAL EAST GERMAN ATTENTION. HE DID NOT GIVE ANY CIRCUMSTANCES OF ARREST, BUT HE SAID BOTH VAN NORMAN HIMSELF AND HIS EAST GERMAN CONTACTS HAD ADMITTED THAT HE HAD ENDEAVORED TO ACQUIRE INFORMATION ON MEDICATIONS

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AND TRAINING. A KEY POINT FOR THE EAST GERMANS IN ASSESSING THE SERIOUSNESS OF VAN NORMAN'S ACTIVITIES WAS WHETHER HE WAS ACTING IN HIS OWN BEHALF OR FOR OTHERS, FOR EXAMPLE, U.S. SPORTS AUTHORITIES OR DRUG MANUFACTURERS. SO FAR, VAN NORMAN INSISTED HE HAD BEEN ACTING SOLELY ON HIS OWN ACCOUNT. THE INVESTIGATING OFFICIALS WOULD BE CONCENTRATING ON THIS ASPECT. I

NOTED THERE WAS CERTAINLY NO USG CONNECTION.

4. VOGEL DID NOT ALLUDE IN ANY WAY TO VAN NORMAN'S BEING PART OF AN EXFILTRATION ORGANIZATION. IT IS POSSIBLE HE WAS HOLDING BACK ON THIS WITH ME, BUT I CANNOT RECALL FROM PAST CASES THAT HE DID NOT LET ME KNOW BASIC FACTS IN A STRAIGHT-FORWARD FASHION. CONCEIVABLY THE GDR INVESTIGATORS HAVE WITHHELD INFORMATION FROM VOGEL, BUT THIS ALSO SEEMS UNLIKELY. ANOTHER POSSIBILITY IS THAT VAN NORMAN'S EXFILTRATION ACTIVITIES ARE STILL UNKNOWN TO THE EAST GERMANS, ALTHOUGH THIS SEEMS STRANGE IF IN FACT HE WAS ARRESTED IN A CAR WITH A FALSE BOTTOM, SINCE THE EAST GERMANS WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY HAVE EXAMINED THE CAR CLOSELY.

5. IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THE INVESTIGATION IS STILL APPARENTLY IN A TENTATIVE PHASE, AND PARTICULARLY SINCE THE EAST GERMANS MAY BE ON THE WRONG TRACK, I THOUGHT IT BETTER AT THIS STAGE TO WITHHOLD THE SUGGESTION (REFTEL PARA 4) THAT WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN A DEAL IN WHICH VAN NORMAN MIGHT BE INCLUDED IN A LARGER GROUP. I TOLD VOGEL I WOULD BE GOING ON LEAVE AT THE END OF SEPTEMBER AND THAT I WOULD APPRECIATE BEING KEPT CURRENT ON FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS. HE PROMISED TO DO THIS. HE ADDED THAT HE THOUGHT THE INVESTIGATION WOULD RUN FOR MOST OR ALL OF THE NORMAL THREE MONTH SECRET

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PERIOD PERMITTED UNDER EAST GERMAN LAW (AN EXTENSION CAN BE GRANTED, HOWEVER). HE STRESSED THAT THE EAST GERMANS TOOK THE VAN NORMAN CASE SERIOUSLY. THEY HAD BEEN EMBARRASSED BECAUSE IT COINCIDED WITH THE ARRIVAL OF AMBASSADOR BOLEN AND ALSO WITH THE US-GDR SWIM MEET IN EAST BERLIN. AS WE KNEW, HE SAID, THE GDR REGARDED THEIR ATHLETIC PROWESS AS A MAJOR ASSET SO FAR AS THEIR INTERNATIONAL IMAGE GOES. HE SUGGESTED A HIGH LEVEL OF SENSITIVITY ON THE INFORMATION VAN NORMAN HAD BEEN ABLE TO DEVELOP. HE ASKED THAT WE HOLD WHAT HE HAD ALSO TOLD ME VERY CLOSE, POINTING OUT THAT IT HAD NOT BEEN GIVEN TO EMBASSY BERLIN IN RESPONSE TO THEIR INQUIRIES. HE SAID IT WOULD BE AWKWARD FOR HIM IF WORD WERE TO GET BACK TO HIS AUTHORITIES, FOR EXAMPLE BY EMBASSY BERLIN'S USING IT IN THEIR HANDLING OF THE CASE, THAT HE HAD PASSED THE INFORMATION TO US.

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6. VOGEL RAISED THE PROPOSED CHILEAN PRISONERS EXCHANGE. HE BEGAN BY SAYING HE WAS UNDER INSTRUCTION TO CONVEY TO US THAT, CONTRARY TO PREVIOUS INDICATIONS, THE RUSSIANS MIGHT BE PREPARED AT SOME POINT TO CONSIDER A DEAL. VOGEL SAID HE HAD NOT TALKED WITH THE RUSSIANS HIMSELF BUT HAD BEEN ASKED TO PASS THE MESSAGE. HE ASSUMED THERE WAS A POLITICAL PURPOSE IN THE CHANGE OF SIGNALS. THE RUSSIANS COULD HARDLY TELL PRESIDENT CARTER THAT IF HE WENT EASY ON HUMAN RIGHTS, IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO MAKE PROGRESS IN PRACTICAL MATTERS, THAT IS, RELEASE OF DISSIDENTS. BUT, HE SAID, HE THOUGHT THEY WANTED TO SUGGEST TO US INDIRECTLY THAT, IN A GENERALLY EASIER BILATERAL CLIMATE, DEALS SIMILAR TO THE CURRENT RELEASE OF GDR DISSIDENTS TO THE WEST WERE POSSIBLE. VOGEL ADDED THAT, IF THINGS ACTUALLY MOVED IN THIS DIRECTION, IT WOULD TAKE SOME TIME TO BRING ABOUT RESULTS. ALSO, THERE COULD NOT BE ANY MASS RELEASE OR EXCHANGE. INSTEAD, DEALS WOULD BE ACCOMPLISHED IN SMALL NUMBERS AND WITH DISCRETION.

7. VOGEL BROADENED POSSIBLE EXCHANGE DEALS TO INCLUDE INDIVIDUALS OF INTEREST TO THE EAST BEING HELD IN COUNTRIES OTHER THAN CHILE AND URUGUAY. HE DID NOT SPECIFY ANY ADDITIONAL COUNTRIES BUT GAVE THE IMPRESSION
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THAT HIS SIDE WOULD BE OPEN TO SUGGESTIONS. HE BROADENED THE EXCHANGE DEAL IDEA IN ANOTHER RESPECT

ALSO BY REITERATING THAT WE SHOULD CONSIDER WHETHER THERE MAY NOT BE INDIVIDUALS IN GDR DETENTION OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO U.S. INTELLIGENCE. HE CITED THE RELEASE EARLIER THIS YEAR OF FRUCHT, WHO HAD WORKED FOR US IN THE 50'S. HE ADDED THAT HE, FOR HIS PART, WOULD TRY TO FIND OUT IF THERE ARE INDIVIDUALS OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO US STILL BEING HELD IN THE GDR.

8. I ASKED VOGEL IF HE THOUGHT WE SHOULD WAIT FOR FURTHER WORD AS TO POSSIBLE RUSSIAN INTEREST IN A DEAL, OR DEALS, BEFORE EXPLORING THE GDR PRISONERS ASPECT. WOULD THE ONE EXCLUDE THE OTHER? VOGEL REPLIED IN THE NEGATIVE. IF SOMETHING OF MUTUAL INTEREST WERE TO DEVELOP ON GDR PRISONERS, HE DID NOT BELIEVE THIS WOULD RULE OUT OR MAKE MORE DIFFICULT A LATER DEAL INVOLVING RUSSIAN PRISONERS.

9. VOGEL ACTUALLY BEGAN THE MEETING NOT WITH VAN NORMAN OR THE CHILEAN PRISONERS, BUT SHADRIN. HE HAD READ THE LITERATURNAYA GAZETA ARTICLE AND HAD CONTINUED HIS OWN PRIVATE ANALYSIS OF THE CASE. HE WAS SURPRISED THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO U.S. PUBLIC REACTION TO THE ARTICLE, EITHER OFFICIALLY OR FROM COPAKEN. HE NOTED THE LITERATURNAYA GAZETA TREATMENT OF SHADRIN WAS NOT COMPLETELY UNSYMPATHETIC. IT WAS TRUE THAT THE ARTICLE HAD BEEN CATEGORICAL ON THE POINT THAT SHADRIN DID NOT TURN UP FOR THE SECOND MEETING IN VIENNA, BUT HE THOUGHT RUSSIAN STATEMENTS THROUGHOUT THE CASE -- THOSE HE HAD SEEN HIMSELF AS WELL AS THOSE PASSED TO US DIRECTLY, SUCH AS HE UNDERSTOOD THEM -- AS BY NO MEANS EXCLUDING THAT SHADRIN HAD RETURNED TO RUSSIAN
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CONTROL. NOW, AFTER THE LITERATURNAYA GAZETA PIECE, HE WAS STILL NOT SURE. HE WAS, HE SAID, SURPRISED THAT THE RUSSIANS HAD CHOSEN TO BLOW THE CASE UP IN PUBLIC. HE HAD THOUGHT THEY WOULD PREFER TO KEEP IT

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QUIET. WHILE THERE MIGHT HAVE BEEN SOME POLITICAL ADVANTAGE FROM THE RUSSIAN POINT OF VIEW IN A HIGHLY PUBLIC SHADRIN EXPOSURE DURING THE FORD ADMINISTRATION, HE DID NOT BELIEVE THEY STOOD TO GAIN MUCH BY PUBLICITY WITH THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WHICH COULD, AFTER ALL, SAY CORRECTLY THAT IT HAD NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE EVENTS LEADING TO SHADRIN'S DISAPPEARANCE AND HAD PRESSED THE RUSSIANS ON HIS FATE. HE STILL DID NOT EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY THAT, DESPITE LITERATURNAYA GAZETA, SHADRIN MIGHT BE IN RUSSIAN CONTROL AND MIGHT TURN UP AT SOME FUTURE POINT. COMMENT: I DID NOT GET THE IMPRESSION THAT VOGEL WAS CONVEYING AN OFFICIAL MESSAGE. HIS REMARKS SEEMED TO BE MORE IN THE NATURE OF PRIVATE MUSINGS AND, CLEARLY, HIS STATED INCLINATION TO BELIEVE THAT SHADRIN RETURNED TO RUSSIAN CONTROL MAY SIMPLY BE AN ATTEMPT TO DEFEND HIS OWN JUDGMENT AND BEHAVIOR IN EARLIER STAGES OF THE CASE. END COMMENT.

10. FINALLY, VOGEL SPOKE ABOUT THE CURRENT RELEASE OF EAST GERMAN DISSIDENTS TO THE WEST. HE SAID CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT HAD TAKEN A DECISIVE ROLE IN THE ACTION, AND ASCRIBED SCHMIDT'S PRIMARY MOTIVATION TO A DESIRE TO RELIEVE THE FRG-GDR RELATIONSHIP OF AN ISSUE WHICH COULD SERIOUSLY BURDEN IT. ON THE EASTERN SIDE,
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VOGEL SAID, THERE WAS A DISTINCT CHANGE OF ATTITUDE FOLLOWING HONECKER'S RETURN FROM HIS MEETING WITH BREZHNEV IN THE CRIMEA. BEFORE THAT THERE HAD BEEN DOUBT ON THE GDR SIDE, BUT HONECKER MUST HAVE GOT BREZHNEV'S APPROVAL TO GO AHEAD. VOGEL SAID 50 DISSIDENTS WERE INVOLVED IN ALI, WITH THEIR FAMILIES. ABOUT HALF HAD BEEN SENTENCED TO PRISON TERMS. IN THE OTHER CASES, PREPARATION FOR LEGAL ACTION HAD BEEN SUDDENLY BROKEN OFF AND ARRANGEMENTS SET IN MOTION FOR RELEASE. VOGEL DESCRIBED THIS AS UNUSUAL IN EAST

GERMAN PRACTICE AND AN INDICATION OF THE HIGH LEVEL
AT WHICH THE KEY DECISIONS WERE MADE.
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